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ABSTRACT

After a year of research and planning, Troy State University's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum program began in winter quarter of 1988. Program proponents believe that: (1) writing is a powerful tool for learning, and (2) the instructor in a discipline can best teach the kinds of writing, research, and documentation pertinent to his field. Interested faculty are invited to apply for the annual interdisciplinary faculty workshop and subsequent activities, including incorporating writing-to-learn activities in one course per quarter and attending three followup meetings each quarter. Participants receive support throughout the year from program personnel who conduct followup meetings and classroom workshops and fill requests for assistance in writing assignment design. Writing center personnel work with students individually and offer workshops on the various kinds of writing that teachers require. Data gathered quarterly indicate that participating faculty and students find the program beneficial. (Author/MSE)

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Troy State University

WRITING-ACROSS-THE-CURRICULUM PROGRAM

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HE023 670

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

PART A

NARRATIVE REPORT

Abstract: After a year devoted to research and planning, Troy State University's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) Program began winter quarter 1988. Proponents of the Program believe that (1) writing is a powerful tool for learning and (2) that the instructor in a discipline can best teach the kinds of writing, research, and documentation pertinent to his field. Interested faculty are invited to apply for the annual WAC Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop and subsequent activities--incorporating writing-to-learn activities in one course per quarter and attending three follow-up meetings each quarter. Participants receive support throughout the year from WAC Program personnel who conduct follow-up meetings and classroom workshops and fill requests for assistance in writing assignment design. Writing Center personnel work with students individually and offer workshops on the various kinds of writing that teachers require. Data gathered quarterly shows that participating faculty and students find the Program beneficial.

Introduction: This document presents a narrative of the history of Troy State University's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program from the awarding of a Title III grant in 1986 to the current academic year, 1989-90. It relates the activities that preceded Program implementation; describes the program itself--structure, ongoing activities, selection and training of participants; explains how the Program is evaluated; and concludes with comments on the effectiveness of the Program and suggestions for educators interested in beginning a WAC program.

Background: In 1986 Troy State University received a three-year Title III grant for faculty development and academic improvement. Writing across the curriculum (WAC) was one of the activities supported by the grant with additional institutional funding. The fact that the University had a strong Writing Center made the establishment of a WAC program feasible; the Director of the Writing Center became the WAC Director as well, and a program coordinator was appointed.

The first year of the grant was devoted to research and planning. The WAC Director and the Coordinator devised an activity time line for fall 1986 through summer 1988 and compiled a list of questions to ask directors of programs chosen for on-site visits. After an extensive review of WAC programs and theory, they prepared a program proposal which gave the background of the WAC movement, presented options for implementation, and offered recommendations for program design. The Title III Project Director and the WAC Director presented the proposal to University administrators.

Following the administrators' adoption of the proposal's recommendations, the WAC Director visited deans and department chairmen to acquaint them with plans for the University WAC Program. During fall quarter 1987, three more steps were taken before the the Program began: (a) writing/learning practices across the University were surveyed, (b) a writing workshop for faculty was held, and (c) full-time faculty were invited to apply for the first WAC Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop. The Program began winter quarter 1988 with courses taught by participants in that workshop.

Description: The Troy State University WAC Program brings together faculty who share two common concerns: they would like students to learn course material better, and they would like students to communicate their knowledge more effectively. The WAC Program is based on these tenets stated in the Program proposal:

1. that writing is a tool for learning;
2. that every writing assignment must be related to the objectives of the course and must give explicit information concerning audience, strategies for approaching the topic, purpose, and evaluative criteria;
3. that learning and teaching must become interactive rather than passive and recitative;
4. that the instructor in a discipline can best teach the particular kinds of writing, research, and documentation pertinent to his field;
5. that the traditional formal term paper is not necessarily the most effective writing assignment.

Each year the WAC Program offers a training workshop for full-time faculty members. Participation is limited to twenty. Faculty receive a stipend for the workshop and subsequent activities which include the incorporation of a writing component (w-c) in one course per quarter and attending monthly follow-up meetings (see Attachment 1 for invitation and application form).

Training workshops help participants meet the objectives outlined above by focusing on ways to design writing assignments that promote thinking skills, that meet course objectives, and that are pertinent to the student's field. At follow-up meetings participants share ideas, discuss w-c assignments, and learn more about topics introduced at the workshop.

During the academic year, WAC Program personnel continue to offer support to participants by working with those who would like assistance in developing writing assignments, by conducting workshops for w-c courses, and by conducting follow-up sessions on pertinent topics. Writing Center personnel support participating faculty by working with students on the various kinds of writing teachers may require. Support does not end when the year of participation ends for a group. It is a continuing aspect of the Program for all who have been participants.

Participants of previous groups are sent program updates, are invited to the orientation session for the current group, and are invited to attend a follow-up meeting each quarter (see Attachment 2, an example of a program update). They participate in panel discussions at the training workshop and are avid recruiters for the Program.

Program personnel include a director and a coordinator. Their job descriptions (Attachments 3 and 4) offer a more detailed picture of Program activities.

The long-term goal of the University is to add a w-c requirement for graduation in each major and minor offered. Ideally, individual departments should choose from a variety of methods the way(s) most appropiate to meet the requirement. A WAC Standing Committee will be needed to oversee the Program, to recommend policy, and to extend WAC to feeder schools.

Results: Quarterly program evaluation shows that the WAC Program at Troy State University continues to reap benefits for students and faculty. Methods used to evaluate the program and comments on data are given below.

1. Workshop Effectiveness:

   a. Annual Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop: Participants evaluate the training workshop so that its effectiveness can be analyzed and its content revised as needed. Evaluations have been positive. When asked if they would recommend the workshop to colleagues, participants have typically responded with remarks such as these: "Most certainly." "Yes, definitely." "Yes. We need more workshops like this." "Absolutely without reservation!"

      Only one adjustment has been necessary: Participants in the first workshop unanimously suggested that the next training workshop be extended to three days to allow more time for assignment design. The change has been worthwhile.

   b. Workshops for Students: Upon request of the instructor, the Coordinator designs workshops for w-c courses. Approximately forty classroom workshops have been conducted since the beginning of the WAC Program winter quarter 1988. These workshops have included diverse topics such as summary, analysis, critique, business letters and memorandums, and writing proposals.

      The workshop evaluation asks students (1) to identify the most useful information offered, (2) to offer suggestions for the improvement of the workshop, and (3) to indicate any aspect of the workshop topic on which they would like more information. Both faculty and students have expressed appreciation for the information and expertise that classroom workshops offer. Students have written remarks like these:

      > "[The workshop] was very useful to me in that it has helped me to feel more confident in my writing. The handouts were wonderful and have been very useful." (Writing Critiques)
      >
      > "I found this session on APA to be most informative and helpful. She [the WAC Coordinator] was very clear and pointed out many items applicable to our paper." (APA Manual Overview)
      >
      > "It was a helpful review. It wasn't confusing, and it was concise. The summary information was particularly helpful." (Review of Summary, Critique, and APA Documentation)

      The Coordinator revises workshop programs appropiately and fulfills requests for more information.

2. Faculty End-of-the-Quarter Report: Each quarter--fall through spring--participants complete a report form. Faculty are asked (1) to reflect on the effects of the writing component in the context of course content and objectives, (2) to comment on student growth in writing and learning, (3) to offer suggestions for overall program improvement, and (4) to

indicate topics they would like to have addressed at follow-up meetings (see Attachment 5).

With the report, faculty submit an evaluation form for each of the w-c assignments they implemented. The form requests information regarding (1) the course objective(s) the assignment was designed to meet, (2) the value of the activity to the course, (3) a description of any problems the assignment presented, and (4) any revisions that will be made for future classes (see Attachment 6).

The spring quarter report form differs from the fall and winter report forms in one respect: It asks faculty to make suggestions for the continuing involvement of WAC participants.

Instructors benefit from writing the quarterly report because they must analyze the effectiveness of their w-c course activities (see Attachment 7 for sample comments taken from faculty reports). Program administrators benefit because the reports help them to analyze the effectiveness of the Program for faculty.

3. End-of-the-Quarter Student Questionnaire: Students enrolled in w-c courses complete a questionnaire near the end of the quarter. The questionnaire allows Program partcipants and administrators to analyze the student's attitude toward writing/learning and to evaluate his perception of the value of w-c assignments as they relate to course objectives.

The questionnaire is divided into four parts. Parts I and II consist of quantitative items regarding the effectiveness of write-to-learn activities, the clarity of the connection between writing assignments and course objectives, the clarity of writing instructions, the degree of self-confidence the student felt when writing in that discipline at the beginning and at the end of the course, and the value of feedback from instructor and peers. Questions in Part III are designed to give the instructor specific written feedback regarding w-c assignments. Part IV asks for an overall evaluation of writing-to-learn activities (see Attachment 8: for sample comments from students, see Attachment 7).

Admittedly, not all students are enthusiastic about the writing component, but altogether their response to Program activities has made the participants' and administrators' work rewarding. See below summary percentages (through fall quarter 1989) of responses to questions regarding the two primary objectives of WAC programs:

To what extent have assignments in this course helped you to learn course material?		To what extent have assignments in this course helped you to become a better writer?	
Excellent	32%	Excellent	18%
Good	47%	Good	46%
Average	18%	Average	28%
Poor	2%	Poor	6%
No response	2%	No response	3%

Responses to the first question are 96% positive: moreover, 79% of the respondents rate their w-c course writing assignments above average for

learning course material. Similarly, responses to the second question show 91% responding positively and 64% rating the course above average for improving writing skills.

Cumulative responses to questions regarding students' confidence in themselves as writers at the beginning and at the end of the w-c course are shown below:

How would you rate your confidence in your writing at the beginning of this course?		How would you rate your confidence in your writing near the end of this course?	
Excellent	14%	Excellent	22%
Good	41%	Good	58%
Average	37%	Average	17%
Poor	6%	Poor	2%
No response	2%	No response	2%

Students show an increase of 8% in the excellent category--from 14 to 22%. Those rating their confidence as good has grown even more--from 41 to 58%, an increase of 17%. As students' confidence has increased, those rating their confidence as average or poor has dropped from 37 to 17% and from 6 to 2% respectively.

Data from student and faculty evaluations shows that both groups agree that students in w-c courses are learning more and becoming better writers.

Conclusions and Recommendations: In his final report, the Title III external evaluator, Dr. Lou Bender, wrote "...the value of writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) has been sufficiently documented to show that TSU has made a significant investment in its future success." Numerous factors affected the successful beginning of the University's WAC Program. The following conclusions and recommendations deal with factors that educators interested in beginning a WAC program must consider:

1. WAC programs are not programs to be hastily begun. Program administrators should carefully review WAC literature, correspond with directors of exemplary programs, visit programs on other campuses, participate in WAC workshops, and attend WAC presentations at conferences. Once they have decided what they want to accomplish with a WAC program, then they should design a program exclusively for their school.

2. A viable program must have the support of school administrators. Many successful programs have begun with quiet support. Research shows that programs which begin with voluntary participants are more likely to endure than programs which are mandated. Indeed, some programs have begun as a "grassroots" movement. Nevertheless, if the program aims for curricular change, as many do, administrative support is necessary for the life of the program.

3. Administrators of a WAC program need to be diplomatic people who are aware of campus politics and who can recruit faculty members without making them feel that they are not good teachers. At Troy State, the recruiting goal has been to bring together an interdisciplinary group

who want to help students learn and write better. For some participants, the Program has become an enrichment program; for others it has initiated an entirely new style of teaching. Many schools find it effective to hire a reliable outside consultant for the initial training workshop(s).

4. Once a plan has been established, it is vital that program administrators develop evaluation instruments that show whether or not program goals are being met. The program can thus be continually revised and serve students and faculty in the best possible way.

5. Another essential aspect of the program to consider is the degree of ongoing support that can be offered to participants whether through program administrators, through resource centers such as writing centers or learning centers, through faculty writing consultants, and so forth. What is offered will depend, of course, on the resources of the school, but those resources should be ready to assist faculty before the program is implemented.

Educators interested in implementing a WAC program should survey campus writing/learning practices, consider the commitment of the administration and faculty to improving learning/writing opportunities for students, and determine the availability of the physical and financial resourses needed to make the program feasible. Then they will be prepared to take the initial steps toward building a WAC program which will benefit students and faculty for years to come.

Prepared by
Gertrude Schroeder, Director
Joan Word, Coordinator
Writing Across the Curriculum
Troy State University

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1. Application for Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop

Attachment 2. WAC Program Update

Attachment 3. Job Description of Director

Attachment 4. Job Description of Coordinator

Attachment 5. End-of-Quarter Faculty Report on Writing Component

Attachment 6. Instructor's Evaluation of W-C Course Writing Assignment

Attachment 7. Faculty and Student Comments on Writing Across the Curriculum

Attachment 8. WAC End-of-the-Quarter Student Questionnaire

Attachment 1-A

THE TROY STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Troy, Alabama 36082 • Phone (205) 566-3000

May 8, 1989

MEMORANDUM

To: All Full-Time Faculty

From: Dr. Gertrude Schroeder, Director, Writing Across the Curriculum GS
Mrs. Joan Word, Coordinator, Writing Across the Curriculum JW

Re: Application for Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop

The writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) movement has been quietly growing in colleges and universities throughout the country. Faculty are discovering that writing is a powerful tool for learning. In fact, many faculty think that WAC may be the most far-reaching response to what is being called the "literacy crisis." A recent survey by the Modern Language Association revealed that more than 47% of the four-year colleges and universities surveyed have a WAC program.

Troy State University invites you to apply for participation in the 1989-90 WAC Program. The program offers an interdisciplinary workshop, follow-up meetings, and support for participating faculty. The workshop agenda will include topics such as these:

(1) how writing promotes learning in all subject areas;
(2) how to design and evaluate student writing in all classes from large lecture to science laboratories;
(3) why students sometimes write poorly;
(4) how to spend less time grading more papers with better results;
(5) how non-graded writing can be used to prompt thinking.

Participation will have as its main goal the incorporation of a writing component (w-c) in at least three courses: one course per quarter during the 1989-90 school year. Participants will be awarded a stipend for the workshop and subsequent activities.

The Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop will be held August 28-30, 8:30-3:30. Carol Holder, Director of Writing in the Disciplines at California Polytechnic University, Pomona, will be the consultant. A maximum of twenty TSU faculty members may participate. An effort will be made to ensure that a variety of disciplines is represented.

Attached are sample comments from faculty and student WAC questionnaires. More than 90% of the students enrolled in w-c courses have responded positively, and more than 80% have rated w-c courses above average. We hope that you will be encouraged to explore the benefits of participation in the program.

If you are interested in attending the workshop, please complete the enclosed application and send it to Dr. Schroeder at The Writing Center by May 22, 1989.

Your participation will be a significant service to the University.

APPLICATION FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP
Writing Across the Curriculum

COMMITMENT

This application indicates willingness to participate in a workshop experience designed to improve writing/learning at Troy State University.

This commitment includes:

1. Doing preliminary reading before the workshop.
2. Attending the workshop August 28-30, 8:30-3:30.
3. Attending follow-up meetings fall quarter (September 22, October 13, November 3), winter quarter (January 12, February 2, February 23,) and spring quarter (March 30, April 20, May 11).
4. Incorporating a writing component (w-c) in at least one course per quarter during the 1989-90 school year.
5. Completing all forms associated with the WAC program.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name_____ Ext. No._____

Department_____ Campus Address_____

TENTATIVE W-C COURSES

Fall quarter course title and number:
_____ Credit hours____ Usual enrollment____

Winter quarter course title and number (preferably the course taught fall quarter):
_____ Credit hours____ Usual enrollment____

Spring quarter course title and number (preferably a course taught fall or winter quarter):
_____ Credit hours____ Usual enrollment____

_____ _____
Signature of Applicant Date

_____ _____
Signature of Department Chairman Date

Please return by May 22, 1989, to Dr. Gertrude Schroeder, The Writing Center.

Attachment 2

THE TROY STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Troy, Alabama 36082 • Phone (205) 566-3000

October 30. 1989

MEMORANDUM

To: 1987-88 and 1988-89 Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Participants

From: Joan Word. WAC Coordinator J. W.

Re: WAC Program Update and Invitation to November 3 Meeting

The August WAC Interdisciplinary Workshop was another excellent one. The 1989-90 group (see list enclosed) is enthusiastic about the ideas Carol presented. and we have begun another good year. Approximately twenty-five percent of our faculty, representing seventeen of the University's twenty-three departments, are involved in WAC. and the program is now institutionally funded.

The Title III funding for WAC ended in September. We were happy that we could write a report that showed Troy State University faculty participation exceeded the expectations put forth in the grant proposal. The number of w-c courses taught the first two years is impressive: ninety-four. Approximately 1.700 students were enrolled in these courses. Altogether. more than 90 percent of the students in w-c courses have indicated that the writing component enhanced their learning of course material. More than 80 percent believe that their writing has improved.

Remember that program support for participants continues. Don't hesitate to call me if I can be of assistance to you--discussing w-c assignments. locating information on kinds of writing, designing workshops for your students. and so forth.

Friday is the date of the last follow-up meeting this quarter. We would like to get all three WAC groups together then. Our agenda includes a presentation by Hazel Marsicano on integrating reading and writing (new information for those who missed her presentation last fall: a review for others). time for sharing some assignments. and time for food and conversation.

Hour: 2:00

Place: The Writing Center Conference Room. Wright Hall 137

Please let us know if you can come. We hope to see you Friday.

Enclosure: 1989-90 WAC Interdisciplinary Workshop Participants

DIRECTOR OF THE WRITING CENTER and
DIRECTOR OF THE WRITING-ACROSS-THE-CURRICULUM PROGRAM

The person who is Director of the Writing Center and Director of the Writing-across-the-Curriculum Program is responsible to the Directors of Student Development Support Services (SDSS) and the Center for Development Education (CDE) and is paid a supplement to compensate for duties performed which include the following:

(Writing Center)

supervises the Coordinator of the Writing Center;

supervises the selection of materials for a developmental education library in the area of English;

supervises the ordering of supplies, equipment, and furnishings for the Writing Center;

supervises the inventorying of equipment and furnishings assigned to the Writing Center;

supervises the selection, training, and supervision of tutors in the Writing Center;

supervises the selection of support materials (commercial and/or staff-made) for the Writing Center;

develops computer programs for the Writing Center;

functions as a resource person for the Writing Center;

keeps abreast of the research concerning Writing Centers.

(WAC)
supervises the Coordinator of the Writing-across-the-Curriculum Program (WAC);

supervises the training of faculty in the WAC program;

supervises the selection of materials, equipment, and supplies for the WAC;

maintains the inventory records of equipment and furnishings assigned to the WAC program;

supervises the preparation of materials for WAC workshops;

develops and conducts workshops on writing for TSU faculty;

develops and conducts workshops on organizing a WAC program for personnel from other institutions;

functions as a resource person for the WAC program;

keeps abreast of the research concerning WAC programs;

carries out other duties assigned by the Directors of SDSS and CDE.

Dr. G. Schroeder
4 October 1989

WRITING-ACROSS-THE-CURRICULUM (WAC) COORDINATOR

The WAC Coordinator is the staff member responsible for all activities related to the WAC Program. In carrying out these responsibilities, the WAC Coordinator:

coordinates workshops and follow-up sessions:
- selects workshop consultant and plans agenda with consultant
- makes logistical arrangements for workshops and follow-up sessions
- prepares correspondence related to workshops and follow-up sessions
- conducts three follow-up sessions each quarter for WAC participants
- prepares materials for follow-up sessions
- NOTE: Below are statistics on WAC faculty participation.

year	participants	writing-component courses taught	students enrolled in writing-component courses
1987-88	18*	38	750
1988-89	18	56	950
1989-90	18*	ongoing	ongoing

*The SDSS Director, the WAC Director, the WAC Coordinator, and the Writing Center Coordinator have participated in the training workshop, bringing the total number of participants to fifty-four.

assists consultants for the WAC Program:
- prepares prereading materials for workshops
- prepares workshop materials
- makes local reservations for consultants

acts as a resource person for faculty involved in the WAC Program who might need suggestions concerning topics, assignments, or assessment:
- answers questions pertaining to types of writing assignments, assignment format, and evaluation
- gathers information on types of writing faculty want to incorporate in writing-component courses

coordinates and conducts workshops for students taking writing-component courses:
- meets with instructors requesting workshops and designs workshops for specific courses
- prepares materials for workshops
- asks for instructor and student evaluation of workshops and revises workshops as needed
- NOTE: An average of eight workshops per quarter have been conducted on topics such as APA documentation style, summaries, abstracts, critiques, business letters and memos. Altogether, forty workshops have been conducted for students; participants number 708.

prepares instruments to assess the WAC Program:
- questionnaire for students to evaluate writing-component courses
- quarterly report form for participating faculty to use to evaluate their writing-component course experience and the WAC Program in general
- assignment evaluation form for participating faculty to use to evaluate their writing-component assignments in regard to course objectives and value to their writing-component course
- workshop evaluation forms

analyzes the results of the study and prepares a report of findings:
- reports quarterly the results of student and faculty evaluation of the WAC Program
- NOTE: More than 90 percent of the students enrolled in writing-component courses have indicated that the writing component enhanced their learning of course material and made them more confident writers. Instructors report that that they are more aware of what students are learning/not learning during the course, that coursework has improved, and that they see improvement in students' writing skills.

keeps current in new developments in WAC programs:
- reads newsletters, journals, and current WAC texts
- maintains contact with colleagues involved in WAC programs at other colleges and universities
- attends national and regional conferences, workshops, and seminars
- requisitions current WAC texts for the Program

acts as liaison between the WAC committee and departments

acts as contact person for feeder schools interested in a WAC program

conducts a refresher course annually for faculty who want to improve their own writing:
- plans program
- invites participation
- prepares program materials
- makes logistical arrangements

performs various other duties related to the WAC Program and reports to the WAC Director:
- maintains Program records
- maintains contacts with faculty who participated in the WAC Program prior to the current academic year
- maintains assignment bank
- prepares and organizes materials for the WAC Handbook which documents Program activities
- publicizes WAC Program activities
- requisitions supplies needed for ongoing activities
- shares information with representatives of other schools

makes presentations on topics related to WAC at conferences (Some recent presentations include "Designing Assignments that Promote Thinking Skills," presented at the 1987 Gulf Coast Conference on the Teaching of Writing and at the 1988 Southeast Regional Conference of the National Council of Teachers of English, and "Writing Across the Curriculum: How Do You Start?" presented at the 1989 Gulf Coast Conference on the Teaching of Writing.)

NOTE: The WAC Director and the Coordinator designed a workshop and a handbook on planning a WAC program. The workshop, held July 24, 1989, was offered to post-secondary schools in Alabama. Representatives from five schools attended. A second workshop, which will be advertised nationwide, has been scheduled for April 9, 1990.

In addition to duties related to WAC Program activities, the WAC Coordinator prepares and administers the English Placement Test seventeen times annually.

Joan D. Word
WAC Coordinator
October 1989

TSU Writing Across the Curriculum
End-of-the-Quarter Faculty Report on Writing Component Course

Instructor_____ Department_____

Course Number and Title_____

Credit Hours_____ Quarter_____ Enrollment_____

If space for any response is insufficient, please attach an additional page.

1. Summary of the w-c course experience.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Comments on student growth in writing and learning.

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Suggested topics for next quarter's follow-up sessions.

_____

4. How can we be of help?

_____

5. Additional comments.

_____

_____

TSU Writing Across the Curriculum
Instructor's Evaluation of W-C Course Writing Assignment

Instructor_____ Department_____

Course Number and Title_____

Credit Hours_____ Quarter_____ Enrollment_____

Please attach a copy of your assignment and a copy of a sample student paper. If the space provided for any of your responses is too small, please attach an additional page.

Writing assignment:_____

Course objective(s) assignment was designed to meet:_____

_____

_____

Value of the activity to the course:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please describe any problems you had implementing the assignment.

_____

_____

_____

Are there aspects of the assignment you plan to revise if you use it again?

_____

_____

TSU FACULTY AND STUDENT COMMENTS ON WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Sample faculty comments:

"I wish I had taken the WAC course two years ago. In the past I never knew for certain how well my students were understanding the lessons. Term papers were usually focused on one thesis, and the midterm/final exams gave me only a glimpse of problems, usually too late to correct." (Aerospace Studies)

"Several of the students have kicked and screamed along the way but are successful in demonstrating learning through their writing. Example: A student who usually offers a two-sentence answer to a ten-part discussion question has written a five-page paper which is coherent, cogent, at least nominally articulate!" (Human Services)

"Written explanations of selected mathematics problems provided an opportunity to gain a better understanding of consumer finance." (Business Education)

I felt that the revised assignments and the new assignments worked much better this time because of improvements from the [WAC] workshop experience. Students responded positively, and I got papers that were better and more connected with my objectives for the assignments." (History and Social Science)

"What a valuable opportunity this has been for me to participate in the WAC program. I have definitely been challenged and stimulated during this program . . . Especially I have enjoyed the interchange with faculty from other disciplines." (Nursing)

Sample student responses to the question: "What is your overall assessment of writing in this [w-c] course?"

"It improved my understanding of material. I didn't just memorize material. I learned to apply it." (HS 230 Introduction to Human Services, sociology major)

"Thinking of things to say is easy--thinking of how to put thoughts to paper is fairly difficult. This course helped better develop my hand/mind coordination." (Military Management I, computer and information science major)

"I felt that the assignments were connected to the course outline very well. They were revised, and we were instructed in a positive manner so that we could learn from what we were doing." (HPR 462 Physical Education for the Exceptional Child, biology education/physical education major)

"Writing takes up a lot of time, so at first I wasn't happy about the assignments. But writing is a skill that is valuable and needs to be learned." (ENG 301 Studies in Women's Literature, chemistry major)

"Very good. I think it helps students deal with real life subjects . . . then writing is just good practice for the future." (CJ 410 Advanced Police Administration, criminal justice major)

"I think that the write-to-learn activities have been very effective in helping me build my confidence in my writing." (ECE 430 Family and Community Services, education major)

THE TROY STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
Troy, Alabama 36082 • Phone (205) 566-3000

Winter Quarter 1989

MEMORANDUM

To: Students Enrolled in Writing-Component Courses

From: Dr. Gertrude Schroeder, Director, Writing Across the Curriculum
Joan Word, Coordinator, Writing Across the Curriculum

Re: WAC End-of-the-Quarter Student Questionnaire

Have you heard that poor writing skills may be hazardous to your career? Poor thinking skills can be, too. The goal of the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program is to integrate writing-to-learn activities with course content so that students will be better prepared for their chosen field.

Instructors representing each of the University's schools attended the WAC Interdisciplinary Faculty Workshop during the break between fall and winter quarters. Your instructor, who was one of the participants, has implemented writing-to-learn ideas presented in the workshop in this course.

The purpose of the attached questionnaire is to give feedback to your instructor, the WAC Program, and the federal funding agency. In short, we all want to know what kinds of activities helped you to learn and to write better. Please try to be as objective as possible when you respond to each item. The more objective you are, the more useful your responses will be to your instructor in planning future writing-to-learn activities and to program administrators in planning interdisciplinary workshop activities.

Your response to this survey is anonymous. When your class has completed the questionnaires, they will be sent to the WAC Coordinator who will compile the data they provide. Your instructor will not read your responses until the beginning of the next quarter--long after you have gotten your grade.

Thank you for your participation in this survey.

Writing Across the Curriculum
End-of-the-Quarter Student Questionnaire

Instructor_____ Department_____

Course Title and Number_____ Quarter_____

Please answer the following questions objectively and thoughtfully. After you have circled your answers for Part I and Part II, record your responses on the machine-scored answer sheet also.

Part I: Circle the letter that most nearly expresses your answer.

A = excellent B = good C = average D = poor

1. To what extent have writing assignments in this course helped you to learn course material? A B C D
2. To what extent have writing assignments in this course helped you become a better writer? A B C D
3. How clear was the connection between writing assignments and course objectives? A B C D
4. How clear were instructions for writing assignments? A B C D
5. How clear were the standards for evaluating writing assignments? A B C D
6. How do you rate your own efforts to use writing for learning in this course? A B C D
7. How would you rate your confidence in your writing at the beginning of this course? A B C D
8. How would you rate your confidence in your writing near the end of the course? A B C D

Part II: Please rate the value of the following types of writing and writing strategies to writing and learning in this course. If any of the items were not a part of your coursework, circle letter E.

A = excellent B = good C = average D = poor E = not applicable

9. Prewriting activities (brainstorming, organizing, etc.) A B C D E
10. Revising. A B C D E
11. Feedback from instructor. A B C D E
12. In-class feedback from peers. A B C D E
13. Speculative writing such as journals, logs, focused freewriting, notebooks, etc. A B C D E

Instructor_____ Course Title and Number _____

Part III: Please answer the questions below as objectively as possible. If the space provided for an answer is too small, please continue your response on the back.

1. The following are writing assignments you have done in this course.

   Assignment(s):

   Which assignment(s) did you find most effective in terms of writing for learning? Please explain why. (In this course you may have done one long assignment which you worked on cumulatively or for which you wrote multiple drafts. If so, please describe its effectiveness in terms of writing and learning.)

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Were there any writing assignments that you perceived as being of little value to the course? Please explain. Would you recommend revising them or deleting them from the course?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Part IV: What is your overall assessment of write-to-learn activities in this course?

_____

_____

_____

Please provide the following information:

Class: ___freshman ___sophomore ___junior ___senior ___graduate student
Major:_____

Circle the figures that indicate the approximate range of your GPA on a four-point scale:

1.0-1.5 1.6-2.0 2.1-2.5 2.6-3.0 3.1-3.5 3.6-4.0

Have you taken the general studies English composition courses (English 101 and 102)?
____no ____yes Where did you take these courses?_____

What grade do you expect in this course? ___A ___B ___C ___D ___F